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ABSTRACT

Researchers sought to compare the perceptions of school administrators who had from 0 to 5 years of experience with management by objectives (MBO), using a survey of 374 administrators in 22 Pennsylvania school districts. A literature review on MBO and management evaluation indicated the need for more longitudinal studies. To compare the attitude changes over time, the researchers divided the administrators into five groups with 0, 1, 3, 4, and 5 years of experience with an MBO system called Administrative Management by Objectives Appraisal System (AMOAS). A 27-item Likert-scale questionnaire was used, with 5 subscales that measured perceptions of (1) the work itself, including responsibilities and work relationships; (2) integration of personal and institutional goals; (3) evaluation fairness, usefulness, and followup; (4) effectiveness of objectives planning; and (5) MBO's effect on personal advancement. Analysis using the Tukey multiple range test and one-way analysis of variance indicated that the more years of MBO, the less positive the attitudes toward MBO; that those with no MBO experience had more negative attitudes about MBO and evaluation but more positive attitudes about MBO and advancement; and that those with 5 years of experience had more negative attitudes about MBO and goal integration. (RW)

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A LONGITUDINAL ANALYSIS OF ADMINISTRATOR ATTITUDES TOWARD A SYSTEM OF MANAGEMENT BY OBJECTIVES

by

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INTRODUCTION

Many approaches have been suggested for evaluating school administrator performance, but an understanding of the processes has eluded researchers and any functional relationship between administrative functions and administrator performance remains weak and loosely coupled. As a result, evaluation has been developed around accountability which simply promotes an arena for a new debate.

The Educational Research Service has studied the question of administrator evaluation since 1968. Their findings demonstrate a rather common pattern -- larger schools tend to utilize some form of evaluation or appraisal, while smaller schools have little or no formal evaluation. The trend through the 70's remained similar.

Historically, various approaches for evaluation of administrators have been proposed. Shetty and Carlisle (1974) stressed the major weaknesses in their historical review of administrator evaluation. They reported that the first weakness was on the substantive data being utilized for evaluation: personal interaction and opinion of others constituted the final rating. This led to an impressionistic evaluation which was intrinsic to the value system of the evaluator. The second weakness was the absence of a results oriented system, although there were vague attempts to guide the individual to improve performance without established standards. They found evaluation to be negative and threatening.

> Unless an evaluation system has the flexibility to permit adjustment to individual differences, it is not fulfilling its purpose, especially if improved performance is the central objective. An appraisal system must be adaptive to the specific goals and priorities of the department as well as to the goals and priorities of the individual (Shetty and Carlisle, p.7)

Lamb (1972) reported that private industry exhibited historical patterns in the development of evaluation systems similar to those experienced in education.

Management by objectives, a process of defining goals and objectives, as well as a method for appraising job performance, was first introduced by Drucker (1954) in the early 1950's. MBO was popularized by McGregor (1967). Having gained recognition in industrial management, MBO won status as a viable system for performance appraisal. Odiorne (1965) stated:

> There is an underlying assumption that any system of management is better than no system at all. Among the advantages are vastly better appraisals of performance. (p.2).

Peter Drucker (1966), who introduced the idea of management by objectives, stated a similar idea relating to the manager of the future being held accountable for results: The theory is that the manager makes things happen to have growth in an organization. Therefore, appraisal of the manager's performance evaluates not only the decision-maker but also the output.

Rensis Likert (1967) described the basis of organization and the role of the manager and argued that the manager must assume the responsibility for identifying common goals which subordinates share with the manager. He considered managing of the human component as the central task of management and described the superior-subordinate relationship as exerting a major influence on the behavior of subordinates.

Herzberg (1966) focused his research on the individual's work and how he/she felt about accomplishing tasks. This concept reinforced the idea of self-motivation and self-actualization which concerns attitude modification. The motivating factors studied by Herzberg were achievement, recognition, work, responsibility and advancement.

Later, Schwartz, an industrial psychologist, made nine replicated studies of Herzberg's theory and found the listed factors to be significant in each case. Sergiovanni, (1967) in replicating Herzberg's work, also stated that when satisfaction is dependent on performance in work, satisfaction and productivity are related.

Barrett (1970), studying goal integration mechanisms in a large industrial organization, concluded that organizational behavior is a merging of the individual's needs and the organization's objectives. The establishment of both individual and organizational goals via a mutual goal-sharing process

seems to be a vital force in job productivity.

> Organizations---whose members find it easy to attain both personal and organizational objectives through the activities they engage in as members of the organization may be said to have a high degree of goal integration. (Barrett, 1970, p.3).

Owens (1970) in reporting his research on the theory of organizational behavior states:

> The main emphasis of recent research supports the view that organizational behavior in a general way, can be seen as a function of a dynamic interrelationship between the needs of the organization as they are expressed by demands on the individual. p.169.

These studies were indicative of the extensive research done in the behavioral sciences, particularly in industry. However, until recently, few studies have been conducted which investigate the basic theories applied to the public sector, especially public school organizations. The current decade shows studies by Sergiovanni (1966), Shetty and Carlisle (1974), Bishop (1969), Hoagland (1968), Springer (1976), Brown (1976), Chase (1977), concerning job satisfaction and dissatisfaction of school administrators. Each of these studies were one year in duration or less.

Rogers (1977), Glover (1977), Troisi (1976), Swainston (1975), and Roth (1974) each looked at the process or managing functions of a management objectives system.

A survey of Fortune 500's largest industrial firms suggested the potential of MBO, but found it difficult to implement. An additional finding was that an MBO system requires a commitment of time and effort by all persons in the organization. There was no formal attempt in this study to relate the evaluation process to employee performance. Therefore, the development of a management system in the public sector has taken on differeing aspects. There seems to be no single instrument or system that is all encompassing for evaluation or development of motivational systems to improve performance. There have been no longitudinal studies conducted pertaining to the attitudes of employees toward an administrator management by objectives and appraisal system.

A few school systems have installed MBO in its entirety into the educational program. While most remain with the more traditional concepts of evaluation, others have changed their administrator evaluation system in related ways. Bell (1974) estimated less than two percent of the staff in public schools were involved in an MBO program.

The Citizens Report on Education in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, released in 1974, stated the need for the development of an improved evaluation system. It recommended that a system should be established in which the leader of the school meets with the persons to be evaluated and develop performance priorities which should be established for the school year. Subsequently, at predetermined intervals in the school year, an assessment would be made by the two parties.

Lahti (1973) in writing on the managerial concept of leadership, claimed that personnel in education must look to the proven techniques in industrial management and systems which have been successful. Through modifications and translations of these techniques, adaptations could give the public institutions the mechanics to solve old problems of evaluation with new approaches.

The use of MBO in education has been increasing in the past few years. Hanson (1971), Estes (1971), Bell (1974), McGrew and Hafeman (1974) have been the prominent practitioners who have stated that educational organizations should derive direction from formalizing goals within school districts. The process of establishing tasks and evaluating the outcome is a basic performance subsystem of MBO. Nevertheless, a basic distrust of any evaluation system still exists. This was summarized very vell by Kleber (1972) when he questioned not only the desirability and the necessity of putting everything in writing, but also the time consumed in developing the objectives. In most cases this would be sufficient reason to eliminate an MBO program; yet, administrators seem to be desirous of implementing and evaluating a new system after proper instruction is given on the new approach.

In summary, the idea of an administrator evaluation system in education is not new. However, it is necessary to find a system that can be motivational, rewarding, and contributing to the improvement of performance on an administrative level.

PROBLEM

The purpose of this study was to identify and compare the perceptions of groups of school administrators with from no years to five years of experience with a system of Management by Objectives.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study reports the results of administrator attitudes toward an MBO system as measured on a twenty-seven item five-point Likert Scale (strongly agree = 1 to strongly disagree = 5) type questionnaire administered to 374 administrators from twenty-two school districts in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The results of the questionnaire were utilized to identify and compare the perceptions of participating administrators toward a Management by Objectives (MBO) system referred to as AMOAS (Administrative Management by Objectives Appraisal System developed by Bernabei). The twenty-seven item questionnaire has a reported reliability coefficient, alpha of (.93). The questionnaire has five subscales which were determined by factor analytic techniques. These factors were identified as: (1) work itself, (2) goal integration, (3) evaluation, (4) planning objectives, and (5) advancement (Hesse, 1979).

The present study can best be characterized as a posttest-only design with five non-equivalent groups. The five groups compared were: (1) MBO1 - Administrators tested after one year of AMOAS, (2) MBO2 - Administrators tested who did not have experience under any MBO system, (3) MBO3 - Administrators with three years of AMOAS, (4) MBO4 - Administrators with four years of AMOAS, and (5) administrators with five years of experience with AMOAS. A one-way analysis variance was conducted to compare the mean responses of the five non-equivalent groups on each of the five subscales of the attitude questionnaire and the Tukey Multiple Range Test was used in the post hoc analysis to test for significant mean differences between group. The five factors, identified by factor analysis techniques, were described as follows:

1. WORK ITSELF — This factor measures the extent to which the individual agrees that his duties and responsibilities are clearly delineated; that he understands the role and functions of those with whom he works; that he has a close working relationship with his superior.

2.	GOAL INTEGRATION	The factor goal integration is a measure of the extent to which the individual feels his professional needs are reinforced by the goals and objectives of the institution and the extent to which the individual professional needs are supportive of the institutional goals and objectives
3.	EVALUATION	The factor evaluation measures the extent to which the individual agrees that his performance reviews have been cooperative, worthwhile and fair. And also that his superior was helpful in the development and follow-up action of his appraisal plan.
4.	PLANNING OBJECTIVES	This factor measures the extent to which the individual agrees that establishing performance objectives in the planning context provides greater job satisfaction; working toward specific goals leads to greader leadership effectiveness; makes the outcome easier to evaluate; mandates greater job responsibility; and encourages organizational unity.
5.	ADVANCEMENT	The factor of advancement measures the extent to which the individual agrees that setting objectives has been helpful in his job; prepared him better for performance review; and affected his job performance positively.

RESULTS

An analyses of variance was conducted to test for significant group mean differences for each of the five factors measured by the MBO attitude questionnaire. The Tukey Multiple Range Test, an approximate measure, was used to test the significant differences between the five subgroups of this study.

WORK ITSELF

Analysis of Variance

Source	DF	MS	F-Ratio	F-Probability
Between groups	4	5.39	9.63	0*
Within groups	369	.56		
Total	373			

* Significant at .05

Group means:

MB01	MB02	MB03	MB04	MB05
2.83	2.33	2.30	2.39	2.57

Table 1

The five group means vary significantly on the factor WORK ITSELF. A Tukey Multiple Range Test for significant mean differences reveals that group MB01 and group MB05 vary significantly from groups MB02, MB03, and MB04. Group MB01 also varies significantly from MB02, MB03, MB04, and MB05. Subjects of 3 years of MBO experience are the most postively predisposed toward WORK ITSELF.

GOAL INTEGRATION

Analysis of Variance

Source	DF	MS	F-Ratio	F-Probability
Between groups	4	2.54	4.73	.0010*
Within groups	369	.54	4.73	
Total	373			

* Significant at .05

Group means:

MBO1	MBO2	MBO3	MBO4	MBO5
2.59	2.70	2.88	2.93	3.17

Table 2

The five group means vary significantly on the factor of GOAL INTEGRATION. A Tukey Multiple Range Test for significant mean differences reveals significant mean differences between MBO Group 5 and groups MBO1, MBO2, MBO3, and MBO4. The differences in group means suggest that subjects see the greatest goal orientation after one year of experience under an MBO system. Subsequent year subjects feel a lesser and decreasing degree of positive attitudes on goal integration than do the subjects in the non-MBO group.

EVALUATION

Analysis of Variance

Source	DF	MS	F-Ratio	F-Probability
Between groups	4	1.52	2.53	.0405*
Within groups	369	.60		
Total	373			

* Significant at .05

Group means:

MBO1	MBO2	MBO3	MBO4	MBO5
2.60	2.72	2.27	2.43	2.49

Table 3

The five group means vary significantly on the factor EVALUATION. A Tukey Multiple Range Test for significant mean differences reveals that the mean scores of subjects in all four MBO groups were more positively predisposed toward evaluation than were subjects in the non-MBO group. The greater the number of years of MBO experience, the less positively predisposed were the subjects with the exception of group MBO1 whose subjects were the least positive on the factor evaluation. Nevertheless, subjects in all MBO groups were more positively predisposed toward evaluation than were subjects of the non-MBO group.

PLANNING OBJECTIVES

Analysis of Variance

Source	DF	MS	F-Ratio	F-Probability
Between groups	4	.24	.44	.7786
Within groups	369	.55		
Total	373			

Group means:

MBO1	MBO2	MBO3	MBO4	MBO5
2.77	2.69	2.70	2.73	2.88

Table 4

The group means do not vary significantly and the Tukey Multiple Range Test shows no significant mean score differences between pairs of the five non-equivalent groups. In a comparative sense, it is observed that the subjects of the MBO trained groups were less positively predisposed toward planning objectives than were subjects of the non-MBO trained group. The least positive group being the subjects having five years of MBO experience.

ADVANCEMENT

Analysis of Variance

Source	DF	MS	F-Ratio	F-Probability
Between groups	4	4.86	4.03	.0033*
Within groups	369	1.21		
Total	373			

* Significant at .05

Group means:

MBO1	MBO2	MBO3	MBO4	MBO5
2.65	2.23	2.66	2.73	2.00

Table 5

The group means vary significantly on the factor ADVANCEMENT. The Tukey Multiple Range Test shows significant mean score difference between group MBO5 and all other groups. The non-MBO also varied significantly from all other groups as well. The non-MBO subjects scored on the average lower (more positively predisposed) than did subjects in all four of the MBO groups. The more the years of MBO's the less positive are subjects toward ADVANCEMENT.

FACTOR/GROUP MEANS

Group	MBO1	MBO2	MBO3	MBO4	MBO5
Factor					
WORK ITSELF	2.83	2.33	2.30	2.39	2.57
GOAL INTEGRATION	2.59	2.70	2.88	2.93	3.17
EVALUATION	2.60	2.72	2.27	2.43	2.49
PLANNING OBJECTIVES	2.77	2.69	2.70	2.73	2.88
ADVANCEMENT	2.65	2.23	2.66	2.73	3.00

Table 6

SUMMARY GRAPH

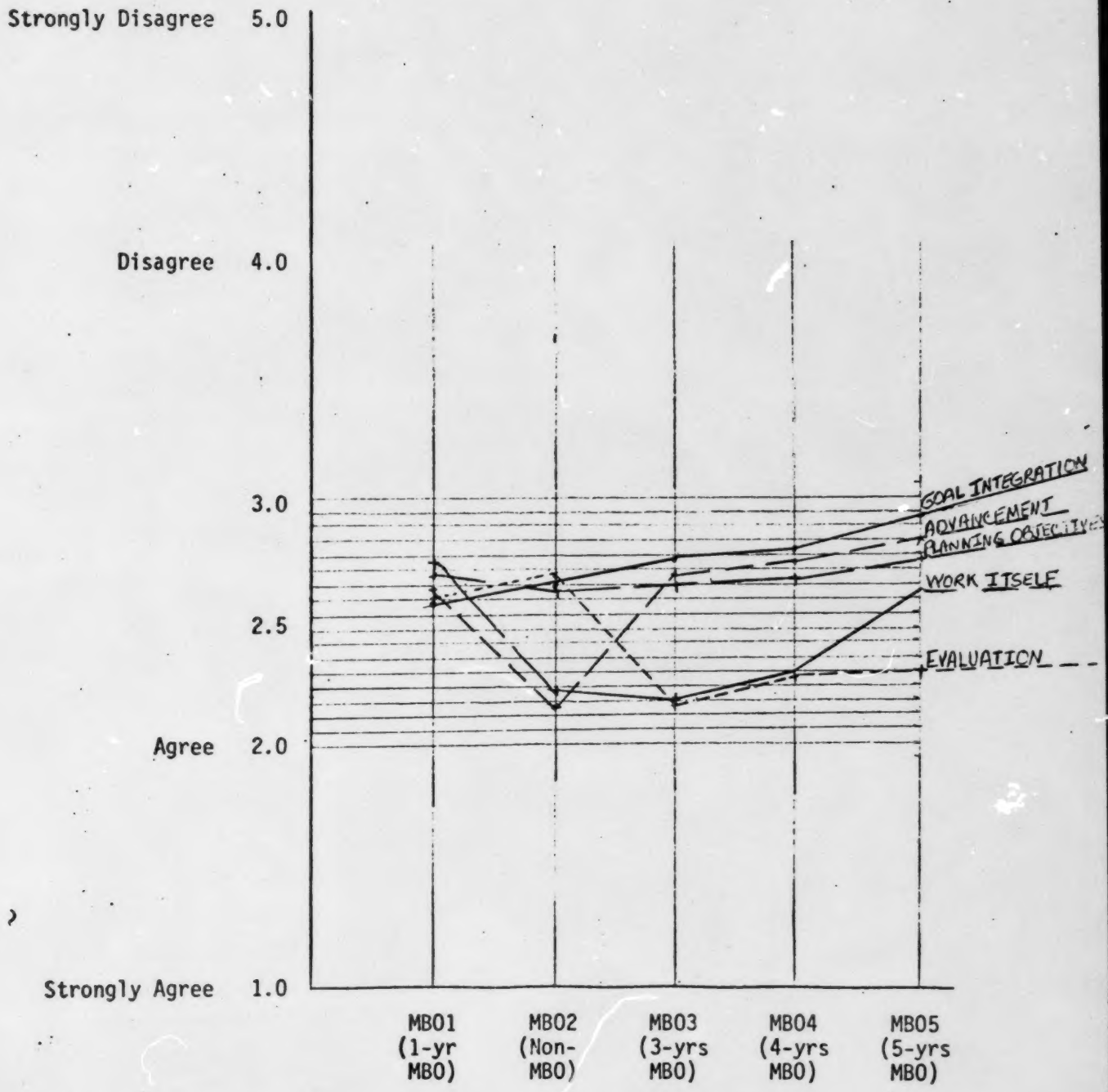

Table 7

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Group mean values ranged from 2.23 (agree) to 3.17 (somewhat agree) for all factors across all MBO groups indicating a lack of very strong or very weak attitudes on any of the five factors.

All factors except the PLANNING OBJECTIVES factor showed significant mean differences between groups at the .05 level of significance in the Analysis of Variance. Group means with 1-year and 5-years of MBO experience varied significantly from the other group means on the factor WORK ITSELF and on GOAL INTEGRATION Group 5 varied significantly from the other four groups while moving toward a more negative predispostion. On the factor EVALUATION, Group 2, the non-MBO group, varied significantly from all other groups while tending toward a more negative predispostion as compared to the four MBO groups. The mean score for the factor ADVANCEMENT showed Group 2, MBO2, to vary significantly from the means of the other four groups in a direction more positively predisposed than all other groups.

The summary graph shows clearly that the more years of MBO experience the more the administrator attitude becomes less positive. The same pattern holds for the factor ADVANCEMENT. Perhaps administrators under the MBO system felt increasingly that individual goals become subservient to institutional goals. This may also account for the less than positive predisposition of MBO groups toward advancement. Interestingly, the most positive predisposition of the non-MBO group was toward the factor ADVANCEMENT. The four MBO groups were generally most positively predisposed toward the factor EVALUATION, while the non-MBO group showed EVALUATION as the least positive. There also appears to be a trend toward a larger spread in factor means with the more years of experience with an MBO system.